

**REMARKS**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and for also acknowledging receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for accepting the drawings filed on September 29, 2003. With respect to the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the application, applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the reference cited on PTO/SB/08 A&B.

The abstract has been objected to. The abstract has been amended to place it into proper form. It is therefore requested that the abstract objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-8 have been examined and rejected as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) by Haffenden et al. (USP 6,226,189). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With this amendment applicant has amended claim 1 and canceled claims 3, 6 and 7 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim applicant's invention. The dependency of claim 8 has been corrected to depend from claim 1. For the following reasons it is respectfully submitted that applicant's claimed invention patentably distinguishes over Haffenden et al.

Claim 1 sets forth *inter alia* a slope that is provided near the card insertion port to guide the insertion of the card into the internal housing wherein an end of the slope is positioned as a stopper. Such a slope is neither disclosed nor suggested in the Haffenden et al. reference. The Examiner refers to "pips" 37 best seen in figures 4 and 6 of the Haffenden et al. reference. These pips are merely two raised buttons which as explained at column 4, lines 38-40, prevent the card from moving from the reading position in a longitudinal direction back toward the loading region.

However, these pips or buttons are not slopes and they cannot as does the claimed slope aid in the guidance of the card into the insertion port. For example, in one non-limiting embodiment of the subject invention illustrated in Figure 1 of the subject application the card insertion port 9 is provided a slope 4 that is used as the stopper. This slope which may have one end fixed to the housing permits the card to slide on the slope 4 thereby facilitating insertion of the card through the card insertion port 9. After the card is inserted the rear part thereof comes into contact with the slope to prevent the card from popping out. Clearly, the slope that is claimed in the subject application is neither a pip nor is a slope suggested from the pip disclosure of the Haffenden et al. reference. Therefore, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 4, 5 and 8 patentably distinguish over the Haffenden et al. reference at least by reason of the claimed slope which is neither disclosed or remotely suggested in the cited reference.

The claims which depend from claim 1 further distinguish over the cited reference by way of the additional limitations set forth therein. The prior art made of record but not relied upon by the Examiner also fails to make up the deficiencies of the Haffenden et al. reference.

In view of the foregoing it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8, being all the claims presently in the application, patentably distinguish over the prior art and are otherwise in condition for allowance. It is therefore requested that the application be passed to issue at the earliest possible time.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance he is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Washington, D.C. telephone number

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
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202-293-7060 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

An extension of time is requested, and the statutory fee is being paid through the Electronic Filing System. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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